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**IDAHO'S PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLARS RECOGNIZED BY THE
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION COMMISSION**

(BOISE) – Seniors Philip H. Cathers of Borah High School and Aurora G. Cossairt of Centennial High School have been named as Idaho's Presidential Scholars.

The recognition was made by the U.S. Department of Education's Commission on Presidential Scholars and is based on both high academic achievement and involvement in school and community activities. Cathers and Cossairt will be invited to the National Recognition Program in Washington, D.C., in June.

During their expense-paid trip to the National Recognition Program in Washington, D.C., the students will be guests of the U.S. Department of Education and the White House Commission on Presidential Scholars. They will meet with government officials, educators and other accomplished people. They and the other scholars from across the nation will be awarded medallions honoring their achievement during a ceremony at the White House on June 19.

One young man and one young woman are chosen each year as Presidential Scholars, representing each state, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and Americans living abroad. In addition, 15 students are selected at large, 20 are chosen for demonstrating exceptional ability talent in the visual and performing arts, and 20 have been named to receive the prestigious honor by demonstrating ability and accomplishment in career and technical education fields.

The Presidential Scholars Program was established in 1964 by executive order of President Lyndon Johnson. It was designed to honor the nation's most distinguished graduating high school seniors. Approximately 4,000 student candidates are selected from the 3.3 million seniors each year for consideration as Presidential Scholars. Most are automatically considered based on having scored exceptionally well on the SAT or ACT college entrance exams.

The Presidential Scholars Commission also partners with several recognition organizations, many in the arts, which can nominate up to 10 candidates from their individual programs. For the arts component of the program, students must register for and participate in YoungArts, a national program that recognizes young people who demonstrate excellence in the arts. Approximately 20 students are selected on the basis of their academic and artistic scholarship in the visual arts, the performing arts or creative writing. Beginning this year, 20 students also will be selected on the basis of their ability and accomplishment in career and technical education fields.

Early in the year, approximately 800 students across the country are named as semi-finalists, and their names and supporting materials are sent to the White House Commission on Presidential Scholars for further review. In April, the White House Commission on Presidential Scholars reviews those applications and selects up to 161 Presidential Scholars each year. A complete list of the 2016 scholars may be found on the commission website at <http://www.ed.gov/psp>.

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